

August 18, 2017

Animal Rights Groups Lose Lawsuit Over USDA APHIS Database

A federal district court judge in California dismissed a case filed by several animal rights groups against the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) over the department's decision to remove animal research facility inspection reports and other information from its Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) website in February. The lawsuit was filed by the Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF), Stop Animal Exploitation Now (SAEN), the Companion Animal Protection Society and Animal Folks.

Per [The Hill](#), the judge wrote, "Courts can order production of documents to specific plaintiffs under the Freedom of Information Act but can't mandate publication to the public as a whole." In May, the judge also refused to grant a request for a preliminary injunction by the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

As reported in previous *NABR Updates*, the USDA removed inspection reports from its website in February over privacy concerns and the Horse Protection Act (HPA). The USDA has since re-published on its website many of the animal research facility inspection reports.

The groups plan to appeal the decision. To read the full story, [click here](#).

USDA Releases New Search Tool for Animal Care Database

USDA-APHIS today announced via a statement the release of a new public search tool for Animal Welfare Act (AWA) compliance records as part of the Animal Care Information System (ACIS). The search tool is a refined version of the tool that was on the APHIS Animal Care website before being taken down on February 3. The search tool's refinements are shown in a [chart on USDA's website](#). The announcement states that APHIS "is continuing to review animal inventories that accompany inspection reports for accuracy. For this reason, the newly posted inspection reports do not include animal inventories, but APHIS intends to make this information available in the future." [Please click here](#) to review the user guide for the new tool.

Congress in Recess Until After Labor Day

Each year in August Congress adjourns their legislative session and goes on "recess," or a temporary break from scheduled legislative action and votes. Many Members of Congress use this time to travel back to their home states and districts to meet with constituents, so we encourage you to set up site visits or meetings with your Representatives and Senators in the weeks remaining until the end of recess on September 5.